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OO RUEHAG RUEHDF RUEHIK RUEHLZ RUEHROV
DE RUEHC #7574/01 2552115
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O R 112112Z SEP 08
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE
INFO RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 3033
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO 8713
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 4396
RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA 5684
RUEHSI/AMEMBASSY TBILISI 8607

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 STATE 097574

SIPDIS, SENSITIVE

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [EUN](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GG](#) [RS](#)

SUBJECT: APPROACHING THE EU IN ADVANCE OF THE SEPTEMBER
15-16 FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING (GAERC) - GEORGIA

REF: STATE 96598

¶1. (U) This is an action request. See paragraph 5.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: EU Foreign Ministers will hold their next General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) meeting in Brussels on September 15-16. We expect the formal agenda to include: Zimbabwe, Somalia, Serbia, Turkey, and Georgia. Background and points on non-Georgia topics have been provided reftel. This cable contains material concerning Georgia. Points are to be delivered as soon as possible at the appropriate level to EU members, as well as to the European Commission and Council Secretariat. Other posts should not/not deliver these points. Posts are requested to include the SIPDIS caption on their response cables and to reference this cable. End Summary.

¶3. (SBU) In our approaches to EU Member States we need to press them for rapid deployment of the EU monitoring mission to Georgia and for continued support for Georgia and its reconstruction.

¶4. (SBU) ACTION REQUEST: Please deliver the following points to the appropriate MFA official(s) as soon as possible (in advance of the September 15-16 GAERC).

BEGIN NON-PAPER TEXT

-- We welcome the September 8 supplemental agreement brokered by President Sarkozy, President Barroso and High Representative Solana that stipulated a timetable for withdrawal of Russian forces from areas outside of Abkhazia and South Ossetia over the next few weeks.

-- Rapid deployment of the proposed EU mission must occur to remove any pretext Russia might use to delay this schedule.

-- We support an EU mandate that ensures access throughout Georgia.

-- We are united in standing firm behind Georgia's territorial integrity, sovereignty and rapid recovery.

-- We will continue to assist Georgia with its reconstruction, and we look forward to participating in the EU-hosted international donors' conference next month.

-- A strong, international commitment there to help Georgia's economy would send a powerful message of solidarity. The United States encourages European efforts to support Georgia's reconstruction with an EU contribution commensurate with the \$1 billion pledge in assistance we have committed to bring to the EU

conference.

-- We will also need to work in close coordination to prepare for the October 15 meeting in Geneva, keeping it focused on resolving the long-standing Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts within Georgia's internationally-recognized borders, and reiterating support for Georgian territorial integrity.

-- In terms of participation at the conference, both Russia and Georgia must participate in the same capacity. Abkhaz and South Ossetians should not be allowed to participate in any way that implies recognition.

-- Russia's disproportionate actions in Georgia have sent a sharp message of Russian aggression to our partners and friends in the region.

-- We should reassure these states of our commitment to their security, independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, prosperity and democratization.

-- We must resist Russian attempts to restrict or undermine them and be prepared to counter efforts to stifle energy competition and diversification.

STATE 00097574 002 OF 002

-- We will be following closely Russia's implementation of its commitments under the six-point cease-fire agreement and supplementary agreement of September 8.

-- While we welcome Russia's commitment to withdraw its forces to their pre-conflict positions, we are concerned by President Medvedev's September 9 statement that Russia would base 7,600 troops in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We should remind Russia that the six-point cease-fire agreement obligates the withdrawal of forces to positions held before August 7.

-- We should also strongly urge Russia not to block the flow of humanitarian assistance to any areas of Georgia. The Russian checkpoint at Karaleti continues to turn back shipments of humanitarian assistance and assessment teams that are trying to reach the villages south of Tskhinvali.

-- Based on Russian willingness to complete its withdrawal and allow EU/OSCE monitors access to South Ossetia and Abkhazia, we will reassess the situation and our relationship accordingly.

-- In the meantime, coordination on possible approaches as the situation develops will send a clear signal of unity and determination.

END NON-PAPER TEXT
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